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HOG SLAUGHTERINGS IN SPECIFIED COUNTRIES PRELIMINARY 1949 AND PROSPECTIVE 1950

Commercial or inspected hog slaughter in the major pork and bacon producing countries of the world in 1949, for which data are available, indicate an increase of about 14 percent over a year earlier according to a summary by the Office of Foreign Agricultural Relations. Total slaughterings for these countries now exceed the prewar level. If economic and producing conditions continue about the same next year, the prospective slaughter for 1950 can be expected to increase substantially, particularly in Europe, North America and a few South American countries.

The increase of commercial or inspected hog slaughter in 1949 generally reflects the improved feed situation in most of the principal producing countries, which enabled them to expand their hog operations. Although sizable increases occurred in Argentina, the Union of South Africa and the United States, the largest percentage increases took place in the war devastated countries of Europe. On the other hand, some decreases occurred in Canada, Mexico, Cuba and Uruguay, while New Zealand remained practically unchanged from a year earlier. Such factors as continuance of relatively high purchasing power, strong consumer demand for meat, plans to restore hog numbers to prewar levels in war devastated countries, favorable growing conditions, and availability of feed from foreign sources contributed largely to this year's gains and towards the probability of a substantial increase in 1950.

Hog slaughter in the North American countries this year was higher than in 1948 primarily because of a 12 percent increase in United States inspected slaughter. Otherwise, slaughter decreased in the other North American countries. The volume of slaughter in 1949 for all of the countries, except Cuba, is considerably above the 1934-38 prewar average.

Commercial or inspected hog slaughter in the principal European countries is expected to be about one-third larger in 1949 than in the preceding year. This gain reflects the improved feed situation during the past year and a half and the upward trend in hog numbers. In relation to prewar, all of the reporting countries, except Portugal and Sweden, were substantially below their prewar volume, ranging from 23 percent below in Czechoslovakia to 64 percent below in Norway. Restoration of hog numbers in most of these countries has been retarded by limitations on the quantities of domestic and foreign feed supplies available. Feed imports during the past year were largely curtailed by foreign exchange restrictions. Realignment of currencies may enable many of these countries to purchase needed feed supplies, particularly from such countries as Argentina, Canada and possibly other European countries.

Total inspected or commercial slaughter in the principal hog-producing countries of South America has shown a steady upward trend during the past 3 years. As a result the 1949 slaughter is about 54 percent above the prewar level. Notwithstanding the downward trend in Argentine hog numbers during the past several years and the heavy hog losses that occurred in Brazil in recent years from cholera, more hogs than prewar are going into commercial slaughter channels in these countries. A favorable hog-corn ration and inclusion of pork in the recent Anglo-Argentine meat agreement can be expected to increase hog numbers and to further augment the volume of commercial slaughter.

Commercial hog slaughter in Australia has shown a slight upward trend during the 1946-49 period, but is still approximately 12 percent below the 1934-48 prewar average. New Zealand's commercial hog slaughter also continued to make small progressive increases during the last 3 years. However, the estimated slaughter for 1949 is more than 30 percent below the 1934-48 average. The Union of South Africa also is expected to increase its commercial hog slaughter by more than 20 percent in 1949 and now is approximately 3 times larger than the prewar level. Japan and the Philippines also indicate some increase in their 1949 commercial slaughter with present volume about 26 and 94 percent, respectively, of prewar.

Commercial slaughter of hogs in 1949 for the United Kingdom, exclusive of Northern Ireland, is expected to more than double last year's volume. The Government policy to expand hog numbers and its decision to liberalize feed rations for hogs are responsible for the large increase expected this year. The United Kingdom, the largest importer of pork and pork products, imported about one-third less bacon and pork during the first seven months of 1949 than was brought in during a similar period in 1948. However, the increase in domestic production in all probability will more than offset this drop. Meat supplies in the United Kingdom will be augmented by the recent Anglo-Argentine Agreement which includes pork and pork products. Also, increased exports of bacon and small quantities of pork from Denmark and a few other countries will tend to offset part of the decline that has occurred in imports this year of Canadian bacon.

Data on commercial slaughter for the Soviet Union, Eastern and Southern European countries are not available, but moderate increases can be expected in those areas. Such increases are believed to have occurred as a result of the numerous Government plans in effect in many of these countries and the relatively good feed situations which prevailed during the past year.

Hog slaughter under inspection in Canada for 1949 is expected to drop about one half million head below that of 1948. But, with a substantial increase in the 1949 spring pig crop and a lesser increase in the fall pig crop, the inspected slaughter for 1950 can be expected to show an upward trend. The present favorable hog-barley ratio and the continuance of high prices for bacon in the U. K. contract will encourage farmers to expand their hog operations. Any reduction in the yield and the price of wheat would hasten the farmers' return to livestock farming.

Plentiful feed supplies in the United States, resulting from a record corn crop in 1948, led to an increase in the number of sows bred to farrow in the fall of 1948 and in the spring of 1949. The larger fall and spring pig crops are expected to increase the 1949 inspected slaughter by about 12 percent and the annual total hog slaughter by approximately 7 percent from a year earlier. With the large 1949 corn crop and the large carryover stocks of corn, the number of sows bred for this fall and the 1950 spring farrowings, in all probability, will be larger than those of the preceding seasons. The current hog-corn price ratio is favorable and there will be a tendency to increase farrowings.

Commercial hog slaughter in Mexico, based on very limited statistics and observations, is expected to drop below that of last year. However, it is possible that a large number of hogs may have farrowed in 1949, because of favorable feed crops in 1948. If so, a larger number of hogs may come to market the latter part of this year and early in 1950. The present volume of hog slaughter is believed to be considerably above the 1934-33 average.

In Cuba, the return of prewar supply conditions has resulted in a lower volume of commercial slaughter this year than in 1948. Such slaughter is decreasing and leveling off primarily on account of the larger supplies of domestic beef, the inability of local processors to compete with imported products and the general weakening of consumer purchasing power. Slaughter in 1950 is likely to be slightly below that of 1949.

The United Kingdom, exclusive of Northern Ireland, is expected to more than double its commercial hog slaughter in 1949 in comparison to 1948. The substantial increase in hog numbers, the liberalized feed rations, and a more favorable hog-feed ratio were the major factors contributing to a better supply situation. This year's slaughter, however, is still less than two-fifths of the prewar level.

Pork and pork products imported into the U. K. for the 7 months of 1949 are about one-third of the prewar level. Although bacon imports from Denmark, Poland and the Netherlands have increased materially, such imports thus far have not been large enough to offset the drop in the 1949 Canadian imports. Chilled and frozen pork imports, however, are larger than in 1948. Because of the emphasis placed on increased meat production, a further increase in slaughter can be anticipated in 1950.

In Eire, commercial hog slaughterings in 1949 may be around 34 percent larger than those of 1948. This increase reflects an improvement in the feed situation which has permitted considerable expansion in hog numbers. Nevertheless the 1949 slaughter is likely to be less than one-half that of prewar. The increase in domestic bacon supplies this year, however, led to lifting of all controls and bacon shipments to the U. K. were to be resumed in September or October. If adequate domestic and foreign feed supplies are available, hog slaughter in 1950 will be considerably larger than in 1949.

Danish hog slaughter for export in 1949 may be almost 60 percent larger than that of 1948. This, however, is only about 58 percent of the 1934-38 level. A good feed grain crop in 1948, supplemented by larger feed imports, partially through ECA assistance, together with an upward adjustment in the U. K.-Danish bacon price last year, were the principal factors responsible for the substantial increase in hog numbers. A limited quantity of frozen pork is being shipped to the United Kingdom for the first time since 1926. Hog slaughter for export in 1950 can be expected to be considerably larger than that of 1949 if the present feed supply situation continues favorable. As of the latter part of August, the total number of hogs were 72 percent larger than a year earlier. Bred sow numbers also were about 76 percent, while pigs and slaughter hogs were 83 percent larger.

Although the estimate controlled hog slaughter in Norway is more than double the 1948 volume, the present number of hogs slaughtered is still about 64 percent below the 1934-38 level. The present maximum fixed prices for hogs and the high prices paid for feeder pigs have encouraged feeding to heavier weights. New price classes and adjustment of prices are being contemplated in order to induce farmers to shift production to the leaner bacon type hogs. Some increase in 1950 slaughter over 1949 is anticipated in that country.

Because of the favorable feed grain crop of 1948 in Sweden and government support prices for pigs, the commercial hog slaughter in 1949 is expected to exceed that of last year by 30 percent. Some of the increase may possibly be due to supplies going into normal marketing channels rather than through the former black market outlets. Sweden is one of the two countries in Europe where commercial hog slaughter now exceeds that of the prewar level. Hog numbers on June 1, 1949 were estimated to be slightly larger than a year earlier. Hog slaughter in 1950 can be expected to be slightly above this year's level.

Total official hog slaughter in the Netherlands for 1949 is expected to show an increase of about 40 percent over a year earlier but is 30 percent below the 1934-38 average. This year's increase reflects the substantial recovery in total hog numbers resulting largely from an improved feed situation. Emphasis on domestic production of concentrates and commitment to return numbers to prewar levels have been factors contributing to the larger hog slaughter in 1949. Commercial hog slaughter in 1950 is likely to be considerably larger than in 1949.

Official hog slaughter in Belgium is expected to reflect an increase of about 35 percent over the preceding year, about one-third below the prewar level. Notwithstanding some downward adjustment in hog prices, the hog-feed ratio is still favorable to hog production. Hog slaughter, therefore, can be expected to reach the indicated level in 1949 and continue the upward trend in 1950.

Commercial hog slaughter in the German Bizonia is expected to increase materially in 1949 and is considerably larger than that of 1948. This increase reflects the effect of the large potato crop in 1948 and imported feed grains for feeding hogs under the fattening contracts. The program for this

area calls for an increase in hog numbers. Based on this year's fairly good potato crop, proposed imports of corn and increase in the number of bred sows, it seems quite evident that hog numbers will increase considerably in 1950. A large increase in numbers will in all probability result in a very substantial rise in the 1950 hog slaughter.

Total official hog slaughter in Austria and Czechoslovakia in 1949 apparently will be somewhat larger than that of the preceding year, but is still believed to be only about one-half to two-thirds their prewar level. Inspected slaughter in Poland for 1949 is estimated to be about the same as in 1948 or possibly slightly larger. Poland is trying to recover her prewar markets for Polish ham and bacon and considerable effort is being put forth by that country to accomplish those ends.

Commercial hog slaughter in the Union of South Africa continues to increase and now is almost 3 times greater than that of the 1934-38 period. Drought in certain sections has resulted in heavier than usual marketings. Large carryover stocks of corn, also, contributed significantly to the increase in 1949 slaughter. Since there has been a surplus of pork products for consumption, the government now permits exports of bacon sides, canned ham and sausages. Slaughter in 1950 is expected to remain at about the same level as 1949.

Inspected hog slaughter in Argentina this year is expected to exceed 1948 slaughterings by more than 20 percent and is now about 5 percent larger than the 1934-38 average. After hitting the lowest point in 20 years, the trend in hog numbers is swinging upward. Apparently, a favorable hog-corn price relationship, the preferential exchange for pork and lard, and some pork sales to Europe last summer have encouraged at least the small producer to expand his hog operations. Since the recently negotiated U. K.-Argentine agreement provides for inclusion of pork products, the commercial slaughterings in 1950 are likely to increase substantially.

Estimates of commercial hog slaughtering in Brazil for 1949 indicate an increase of 5 percent above that of 1948 or almost double the prewar slaughter. Favorable hog-corn price relationship, and pork prices higher than beef, apparently are encouraging to the producers. As a result hog operations are likely to be expanded and reflected in the large number of slaughterings in 1950.

Although Australian hog numbers on March 31, 1949 reached their lowest level since 1939, commercial slaughterings in 1949 are expected to be about 4 percent larger than those of 1948. The estimated slaughter for this year is about 12 percent below the prewar level. Some sources are of the opinion that the Ministry of Food will grant an increase in the price of pork products for the coming contract year which began October 1.

The decline in numbers is attributed to several factors among which are the unfavorable hog-feed price ratio, changing from selling cream to selling of whole milk and the general shortage of labor and materials needed in hog production. Grain farmers have found it more profitable to sell wheat than to feed grain to hogs, since the prevailing price of hogs is claimed to be less

than the cost of production. If the contract price is increased for the coming year and feed supplies are adequate, some increase in commercial hog slaughter is likely in 1950.

In New Zealand, commercial hog slaughter in 1949 is expected to show practically no change from the previous year. Present volume of slaughter is about one-third below the prewar level. Hog numbers according to the data available are relatively constant and if the new contract price is reflected in a higher price to the producer, commercial hog slaughter in 1950 may be somewhat larger than this year.

This is one of a series of regularly scheduled reports on world agricultural production, approved by the Office of Foreign Agricultural Relations Committee on Foreign Crops and Livestock Statistics. For this report the Committee was composed of Joseph A. Becker, Chairman, Elmer A. Reese, Hazel B. Kefauver, Stanley Mehr and Dwight R. Bishop.

HOGS: Slaughter (commercial or inspected) in specified countries,
calendar year, average 1934-38, annual 1947-1950

Continent and country	Average			Preliminary		Indicated
	1934-38	1947		1949	1950	
	Thousands	Thousands	Thousands	Thousands	Thousands	Thousands
NORTH AMERICA						
Canada 1/.....	3,239	4,453	4,486	3,900	4,300	
Mexico 2/.....	1,280	1,897	1,800	1,620	1,700	
United States- Inspected....	34,673	49,116	47,615	53,200	60,000	
- Total.....	57,229	74,710	72,311	77,400	85,000	
Cuba 3/.....	270	385	425	270	260	
EUROPE						
Austria 4/.....5/	1,798	892	866	1,000	1,150	
Belgium 4/.....	1,949	609	993	1,350	1,700	
Bulgaria 3/.....	134	23	-	-	-	
Czechoslovakia 4/.....5/	3,644	2,572	2,145	2,800	3,700	
Denmark 3/.....	4,355	2,031	1,604	2,525	3,700	
Eire 3/.....6/7/	1,119	450	384	515	715	
Finland 1/.....8/	216	-	-	-	-	
Germany Bizone 3/.....6/	6,500	512	176	500	2,000	
Hungary 3/.....	1,434	86	-	-	-	
Netherlands 4/.....	2,133	1,068	1,067	1,500	2,500	
Norway 1/.....	333	86	55	120	180	
Poland 1/.....5/	6,100	2,811	4,177	4,200	5,400	
Portugal 1/.....	225	258	338	400	325	
Rumania 3/.....5/	777	-	-	-	-	
Spain 9/.....10/	397	102	-	-	-	
Sweden 3/.....	1,396	1,037	1,158	1,500	1,530	
Switzerland 1/.....	793	317	500	600	620	
United Kingdom 3/ 11/.....6/	5,633	801	1,040	2,350	2,750	
Yugoslavia 3/.....	661	-	-	-	-	
ASIA						
Japan 3/.....	1,150	96	238	304	350	
Philippine Islands 3/.....	795	616	716	750	775	
SOUTH AMERICA						
Argentina 1/.....	1,240	873	1,057	1,300	1,800	
Brazil 3/.....	2,960	5,256	5,250	5,500	5,650	
Colombia 3/.....	594	613	619	620	610	
Uruguay 3/.....	86	132	140	115	109	
AFRICA						
Union of South Africa 3/.....	251	480	619	750	775	
OCEANIA						
Australia 3/.....7/	1,912	1,524	1,614	1,675	1,700	
New Zealand 3/.....12/	968	614	643	646	650	

1/ Inspected slaughter. 2/ Total slaughter. 3/ Commercial slaughter. 4/ Total official slaughter. 5/ Year 1936 only for Czechoslovakia, year 1938 only for Poland, and year 1939 only for Rumania and Austria. 6/ Average for 4 years only. 7/ Year beginning June 1 for Eire and July 1 for Australia. 8/ Average for 3 years only. 9/ Slaughter in provincial capitals. 10/ Average for years 1931-35. 11/ Great Britain only. 12/ Year ending September 30.

Office of Foreign Agricultural Relations. Prepared or estimated from official statistics, U.S. Foreign Service reports, and other information. Data relate to present boundaries, unless otherwise noted.

